

Connections

March 2010

One Year Later First Stimulus Project Is On Track

Feb. 17 marked the one year anniversary of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the start of construction on a Missouri bridge that became the nation's first recovery act project.

Within minutes of President Barack Obama signing the recovery act into law, MoDOT made history by signing a contract and beginning construction on the replacement of a Depression-era bridge over the Osage River near Tuscumbia, Mo.

Today, this recovery act project is a steady symbol of progress. According to a Roads & Bridges magazine article, the bridge is "a prime example of ARRA's intent."



Missouri celebrated the first recovery act project in the nation on Feb. 17, 2009.

Design work was already in process to replace the bridge. Recovery act funds helped push the timetable up, and today the bridge is more than halfway complete. Crews have finished excavation work and built portions of the bridge deck and the approaches on both the north and south sides of the river. Work is under way on the foundation, and soon girders will be placed and the deck spanning the river will be constructed.

The new bridge will be finished this fall. It will provide a much wider and safer passage over the Osage River with two



The first stimulus project in the nation - a new bridge over the Osage River near Tuscumbia - is on target to be completed this fall.

eleven-foot wide traffic lanes and three-foot wide shoulders. The project also met ARRA's objective to quickly put people back to work and jump-start the economy. "With a quick blast of an air horn, the project immediately began connecting people with jobs that are still being supported today by ongoing

construction on the new span," Director Pete Rahn said. Overall, the \$525 million in ARRA funds received by the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission will complete work on 196 highway and bridge projects and bolster Missouri's economy by supporting more than 14,000 jobs.

Missouri Receives Millions for High-Speed Rail Projects

Missouri was awarded \$31 million for high-speed rail projects under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. "We are very pleased. This is the best news we could have hoped for given the extreme competition for rail funding," said Brian Weiler, director of MoDOT's Multimodal Operations Unit. "We are excited to have funding for additional projects that will support jobs and carry on the momentum of building a faster and more reliable passenger and freight train service in Missouri and a stronger rail corridor across the Midwest."

The recovery act funding will be used for three shovel-ready projects that will support approximately 190 direct jobs:

- A second rail bridge over the Osage River that will eliminate delays caused



- by a bottleneck, plus additional crossovers that will reduce maintenance flexibility;
- A universal crossover near the Kirkwood Amtrak station that will ease the flow of passenger trains into and out of the St. Louis area; and

- Safety improvements at several rail crossings, primarily west of Sedalia. It will also fund preliminary engineering on six future improvement projects worth approximately \$100 million, including double tracks between Lee's Summit and

Pleasant Hill, a passing siding at Kingsville, a grade separation at Strasburg, a passing siding extension at Knob Noster and universal crossovers - a device that allows trains to crossover to another track in either direction - at Bonnots Mill and Hermann. Missouri's success was part of a larger Midwest regional effort that, as a whole, captured \$2.6 billion of the \$8 billion in ARRA funds available for high-speed rail corridor improvements. The state consortium, known as the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative, is involved in an ongoing effort to develop and expand access to an improved passenger rail system in the Midwest. Besides Missouri, other participating states are Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Nebraska and Wisconsin.

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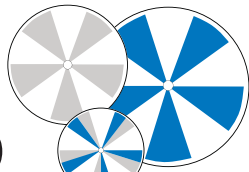
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Fueling Change

by Kristi Jamison

From traffic monitoring cameras to dynamic message boards to material management systems in maintenance trucks, new technologies change and improve the way we do business every day. Now these advances are reaching further into MoDOT’s maintenance operations as we prepare to implement a new automated fuel management program this year.

The automated system is a sound business decision that provides the ease, security and availability MoDOT needs in a fuel system. It will help streamline the fueling processes by providing 24/7 access to everyone with a fuel card, giving a more accurate accounting of fuel inventory, automating over-the-counter transactions no more recording the dispensing of fuel with a pencil and clipboard) and securing our petroleum products.

Tallahassee, Fla.-based Syn-Tech Systems, Inc. was awarded the contract to implement our new automated fuel system in January.

“We are confident that Syn-Tech Systems will deliver an automated fuel system that truly meets MoDOT’s needs,” said Beth Ring, General Services director. “The company has more than 30 years of experience in the automated fuel business, and has implemented systems with hundreds of public and private clients, including 13 other DOTs.”

Haven’t We Tried This Before?

This is not the first time MoDOT has

tried to implement an automated system. Learning from earlier trials and errors has enabled MoDOT to develop a sound plan for success. This time, an Automated Fuel Management Project team made up of individuals representing all areas of MoDOT that use, maintain and track fuel was formed. The team met for a nine-month period to identify the elements of a system that would meet our basic needs.

“The team really dug deep, conducting intensive research to determine which system and vendor would provide the best benefits for the department,” said Laurel McKean, District 2 transportation project manager and the Automated Fuel Management Project team leader. “We also made sure controls were in place to protect the department and keep the vendor on task.”

The team required full bonding from the vendor to secure MoDOT’s resources against any problems that could arise with the system. They also called for surveys of each site to be completed prior to the installation of any equipment. In addition, when installation begins, it will be done in phases to provide checkpoints that verify project sections are completed and working correctly before moving forward to another section.

When Will the New System Be Installed?

St. Louis-based Neumayer Equipment Company will aid Syn-Tech by installing Syn-Tech’s Fuelmaster consoles at



A new automated fuel system will save time and money.

our sites. Neumayer, which has offices in St. Louis, Blue Springs, Jefferson City and Cape Girardeau, will also provide system support.

MoDOT and Syn-Tech are working together to establish a rolling installation schedule that allows one district to come online at a time. Syn-Tech is nearly completed with site visits to determine the course of action for installation in each district. District 5 will be the first to have equipment installed.

The Automated Fuel Management Project team will tour the districts in March and April to introduce and discuss the new system. More information about the vendor and use of the new automated fuel management system is available on the Intranet under General Services. An installation schedule will be posted there when it becomes available.

MoDOT Has Obligated All Recovery Act Funds Ahead of Schedule

2

MoDOT has obligated all of the \$524.6 million it received in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds for MoDOT administered projects, meeting the required March 2 deadline a month ahead of schedule.

State departments of transportation were required by ARRA guidelines to obligate all their economic stimulus funds by March 2 or risk losing them.

Pushing to obligate this funding as quickly as possible in a competitive bidding environment resulted in overall bids coming in \$24 million under what MoDOT had estimated. That savings enabled the department to add another 53 recovery act projects.

More information on Missouri’s recovery act projects can be found at www.modot.org/readytogo.

Tough Choices for MoDOT

This message is from MoDOT Director Pete Rahn and was distributed to employees on Feb. 5. It outlines some difficult decisions made during these challenging financial times. Additional strategies are being considered to maintain a high level of service to customers.

Dear Team MoDOT,

I don’t use this salutation lightly. We are a team ... in fact, we are one heck of a team. For several years now, we have discussed the “cliff” in highway funding that was approaching. Due to federal stimulus funds and bonding for Safe and Sound, our construction budget this year hides the underlying slide in core construction monies available to MoDOT. With a very uncertain future for both state and federal funds, I am implementing some painful steps to focus our resources on our central mission.

The first was the beginning discussion regarding the status and location of the credit unions serving our 10 districts. It is my strong desire that

all of the credit unions remain strong, viable financial institutions that serve our employees and other members, but with both legal and functional separation from MoDOT. We will be working with the credit unions and the Missouri Department of Insurance to facilitate a smooth and orderly transition.

The next action involves the suspension of the state contribution (i.e., MoDOT match) to qualified participants in the State of Missouri Deferred Compensation Plan. The Governor announced that he is suspending the deferred compensation contributions the state makes on behalf of its employees. MoDOT will also suspend its match. Please note that the benefit plan itself will remain in place. Your previous investment will be managed as in the past and each employee will still have the opportunity to defer a portion of your paycheck to take advantage of tax deferred benefits of the Plan; only the state match is being suspended.

A major factor in this decision is that the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission has increased its

contribution to MPERS to fund our retirement system. MoDOT’s fiscal year 2009 retirement system contributions totaled \$82.3 million. We’ve budgeted an additional \$8 million this fiscal year and anticipate an additional \$22.5 million in contributions in FY2011. These increases come at a difficult time. The suspension of the match can reduce our department’s costs by \$2.2 million per year. Employees that have been receiving this state match will notice the change beginning with the March 31, 2010, paycheck. At this time, it is uncertain when state contributions in the deferred compensation plan might resume.

The Commission and I recognize the many benefits of employee participation in the State of Missouri Deferred Compensation Plan and understand the negative impact this change will have on department employees. Every state agency is navigating through challenging financial times and decisions like this are difficult but necessary. The Commission and I want to express our appreciation for your continued hard work and dedication as we work through these lean budget years.

Pete

Let's Pick It Up – April is the No More Trash! Bash

by Sandra Hentges

All winter long we drive Missouri's roads and see it. It's in the grass, in the brush, on the river banks, in the ditches, it's everywhere, and it's disgusting ... litter.

Trash seems to accumulate over the winter months when we are all too cozy in our cars and our homes to want to get out and clean up the roadsides. But then April arrives, the grass turns green and the trash is even uglier along Missouri's landscape. Luckily, April is No More Trash! Bash month in Missouri. So, to borrow a few words from the Black Eyed Peas, "jump off that sofa," let's pick it up!



Ruth Ann Short from Marthasville is an adopter in the Missouri Adopt-A-Highway program. Short sets out each day in her safety vest, yellow bags in hand, to clean up all the roadsides leading into her community.

Schedule a cleanup or educational activity during the month of April to help spruce up Missouri, report your activity and the Missouri departments of Transportation and Conservation will reward you with a 2010 No More Trash! Bash lapel pin and enter you in a drawing to win a wildflower gift pack.

Last year's Bash saw hundreds of educational efforts in schools, at rest areas, at community events, during Earth Day celebrations, on radio talk shows and through Take Your Child To Work Day, news conferences, trash can painting events, television promotions and more.

Altogether, 111,134 bags of trash were collected throughout Missouri, 26,659 bags more than last year. More than 838 groups participated comprised of more than 10,068 volunteers.

Cleanup crews found plenty of objects too large to fit into trash bags including tires, hubcaps and a fish tank. The most commonly found items were aluminum cans and fast food bags. Ironically, the USA Freedom Corps also found a "Be Good to Mother Nature" mug.

"We were lucky and thankful to have so much enthusiasm and hard work last year, but I think we can pick it up a notch," said Stacy Armstrong, roadside management specialist. "We just need everyone who participated last year to get one or two more people to confront the litter problem. It will make such a difference."

For more information, visit www.nomoretrash.org.



Weather Stations Improve Winter Operations

by Melissa Black

Thirteen new Environmental Sensor Stations across Interstate 44 are helping make roads safer for drivers and saving the department valuable time, resources and money. The new stations were all installed by the end of December in time to provide weather information for what has turned out to be a very busy winter season.

The 13 new stations are part of a statewide Road Weather Information System across Missouri, which includes three other operational stations currently in St. Joseph and St. Louis. A typical station includes a 30-foot tower with weather sensors to monitor wind, temperature, humidity, visibility and pavement surface and sub-surface temperatures.

"These stations give us the same information meteorologists use, but they also allow us to know what's going on where the rubber meets the road," said Tim Jackson, maintenance liaison engineer. "Knowing the pavement temperature is a key factor in understanding whether snow will stick to the roads and whether we need to treat them or not."

Knowing this information means the department isn't wasting personnel time, materials or equipment to treat roads when it's not necessary. That translates into saving money, as well as improving safety.

For example, the Southwest District used the stations during a recent snow storm to determine that pavement temperatures were warm enough that only bridges along their stretch of I-44 needed to be treated, not the entire route. This one incident alone saved thousands of dollars.

"The stations actually pay for themselves after a while," Jackson said. The 13 new stations cost \$451,000. They were paid for through a combination of district and Central Office funds.

Although the department has had stations in place since the '90s, this is the first time they have concentrated on a specific corridor to manage it better. The new stations are maintained by the company that installed them to ensure we receive accurate weather information to help maintenance supervisors direct snow removal operations.

"We picked I-44 because we've noticed a lot of storms come from the southwest and head northeast along this corridor," Jackson said.

If we receive additional funding, the department may look at installing these on other corridors in the future.

Meet Your Commissioners Commissioner Grace M. Nichols

Q: Please tell us a little about your background and/or career.

A: I was born in Alexandria, Va., and raised in Arlington, Va. I graduated from The College of William and Mary, then Saint Louis University School of Law. I served as mayor of St. Charles, Mo., and spent many years in private law practice.

I served as Senior Circuit Judge in St. Charles County, hearing cases until appointed as a commissioner in 2008. Many community organizations keep me busy, including the United Way, Foundry Art Center, Mosaic Arts Festival, Jaycees and Youth In Need. My husband John and I have three children and five grandchildren.

Q: What attracted you to becoming part of the MHTC?

A: It was appealing to have the opportunity to help shape major decisions that affect all of Missouri's citizens.

Q: What has been your most interesting experience as part of the Commission?

A: It has been a great experience to be a part of the monthly gatherings around the state with elected officials, business members and citizens from all walks of life, including MoDOT employees. All of these groups are valuable in shaping commission decisions.

Q: What have you learned about Missouri transportation?



A: I've learned it is woefully underfunded, but all forms of transportation receive careful attention from staff and the commission.

Q: What has been your favorite road trip or vacation, in Missouri or otherwise?

A: Our family took a road trip from Missouri to California and up the West Coast when our children were young. It gave me a sense of the vastness of the U.S. and the difference in the regions of our country.

Q: What are your hobbies and interests?

A: I enjoy reading and meeting new people.

Q: What would most MoDOT employees not know about you?

A: I am the youngest of five girls and my father was the assistant highway engineer for our county. I spent many Saturdays driving in the car with him inspecting jobs and problem areas.

What Are Your Thoughts?

Let us know at www.modot.org/ConnectionsSurvey

Director Rahn Receives Awards for Dedication and Community Betterment

Director Pete Rahn's focused leadership on Missouri's transportation system is not going unnoticed. Two organizations recently honored him for his dedication to highway transportation systems and service to the citizens of Missouri.

Rahn was honored by the Road Gang, an organization of transportation industry executives. After addressing the group at the Transportation Research Board annual meeting in January, Rahn was presented with the Lester P. Lamm Memorial Award commending his public service and dedication to U.S. highway transportation programs.

The Missouri Growth Association chose Rahn as the individual winner



for their 2010 Community Betterment Award. Specifically, he was noted for his years of service to the citizens of Missouri and for the success in rebuilding 10 miles of Interstate 64.

Awards to Recognize Outstanding Service

Do you know a co-worker who really excels at what they do? Wouldn't it be great if they could be recognized for their outstanding service? The Missouri State Employee Awards of Distinction provide that opportunity.

The awards are given in conjunction with State Employee Recognition Week, May 10-14. Any state employee can nominate another state employee in good standing (except for elected officials and department, division and deputy division directors). You can

nominate individuals in the following categories: heroism, human relations, innovative suggestion of the year, leadership, public service and safety.

More information, including a nomination form, can be found at <http://serd.mo.gov/AwardDistinctionHome.pdf>. Nominations are due March 22 and should be submitted to Carol Lueckenhoff, Human Resources/Employee Development, at Carol.Lueckenhoff@modot.mo.gov.

Virtual Public Meetings Make It Easy to Participate

by Matt Hiebert

Keeping citizens involved in the decision-making process is an important part of any project. After all, they use and pay for improvements to Missouri's roads and bridges. Knowing how a project will affect them is a matter of safety, convenience and transparency. Although MoDOT hosts public meetings for most projects, getting people to participate is always a challenge. It isn't that people don't care; they often just don't have time to attend.

To remove this obstacle from the public-involvement process, MoDOT began hosting virtual public meetings on its district web sites. These online, interactive Web pages allow participants to review the same plans, documents, schedules and impacts that they

would at a traditional public meeting. And they can do it from the convenience of their own home whenever they have time.

Visitors can also communicate with MoDOT engineers by leaving detailed comments about the project.

Thousands of citizens have already participated in virtual public meetings. Since MoDOT first hosted an online meeting in 2008, 12,263 people have used the venue to stay informed about upcoming MoDOT projects. A few months ago, 20 or fewer people might have shown up for a public meeting. Now hundreds of people review the posted materials and leave comments that MoDOT uses to move the project forward.

Save the Date! Second Annual Ride for Remembrance



June 12, 2010

Motorcycle riders from around the state will ride to Jefferson City in honor of MoDOT's fallen workers.

Proceeds Benefit the Fallen Workers' Memorial.

For more information, contact:

Kaye Stacy	Steve Brown	Dan Weaver
573-751-7187	573-751-9247	573-346-3053

Videos Now Online

Check out the new Missouri Miles monthly video series on www.modot.org/modotvideos or find it on the MoDOT YouTube page at www.youtube.com/modotvideo.



March Service Anniversaries

40 Years		Linda M. Lee	D10
Daniel J. Schaefer	CO	William D. Haselhorst	CO
25 Years		Norbert T. Dickneite	CO
Danny R. Browning	D1	Elizabeth A.Toebben	CO
Kathleen S. Hepworth	D2	10 Years	
Terry L. Bell	D3	Daren L. Meyer	D1
Stanley K. Powell	D4	Charles H. Schumann	D2
Dan C. Watkins	D4	George I. Brockhaus	D2
Russell D. Yarnell	D5	Cynthia L. Gervais	D3
Duane L. Kliethermes	D5	Richard W. Shipley	D4
John P. Tellman	D5	Ronald D. Eads	D4
Stefan Sumowski	D5	Randy J. Boatwright	D6
Cynthia J. Coleman	D6	Justin B. Jeffries	D7
Anthony R. Utz	D6	Randall M. Morgan	D7
Robert S. Herzberg	D6	Billy R. Schnaufer	D7
Steven M. Dunn	D8	Jackie W. Gardner	D7
Donald Q. Taylor	D8	Robert M. Edwards	D8
Robert E. Laughhunn	D9	Michael T. McCormick	D8
William B. Carter	CO	Jeffery P. Taylor	D8
20 Years		James D. Stewart	D8
Albert L. Janssens	D4	Gregory S. Hinton	D9
Richard J. Cotriss	D5	Kevin L. Tinker	D10
Ricardo R. Ramirez	D5	Jeffrey L. Leible	D10
Jeff Barnhouse	D7	Jerry L. Lewis	D10
Tony J. Gates	D7	Terry L. Sanders	D10
Roy D. Stoddard	D8	Michael T. Darnell	D10
Jeffrey C. Mabury	D10	Billy L. Griffin	D10
Tammy J. Stallings	D10	Linda M. Mallot	CO
David L. Ketchum	D10	Christopher J. Ritoch	CO
Micheal W. Hyslop	D10	Denise L. Voss	CO
Todd M. Grosvenor	CO	Lana R. Nelson	CO
15 Years		5 Years	
Timothy A. Drew	D2	Bradly W. Sherer	D1
Shelie A. Daniel	D4	Nathan G. King	D1
David K. Blundell	D4	James C. Kirkendoll	D1
Gary J. Gerlemann	D6	Corey E. Cross	D1
Jamie L. Sartin	D8	David L. Wiederholt	D1
		Donald G. Burns	D1

Jaylon M. Ashburn	D1
James R. Eivins	D1
David L. Bettis	D3
Monte R. Basinger	D3
Aubrey W. Stidham	D3
John J. Huber	D3
Charles L. Hill	D3
Randall J. Carrier	D4
Lawrence W. Nevels	D4
Gary L. Doolen	D7
Kerry R. Elam	D9
Jerry M. Stewart	D10
Brad K. Clark	D10
Clifford Shannon	D10
Tim P. Acord	D10
Rachel A. Wiles	CO
Johnny J. Bell	CO
Anup K. Choudhury	CO
Mindy D. Grapes-Bess	CO
Michael K. Montgomery	CO

In Memoriam

Active		
Marilyn L. Herndon	D8	Jan. 21
Retirees		
Frank A. Hindman	D4	Dec. 10, '09
Robert C. Swenka	D3	Dec. 30, '09
James "Mac" L. McCubbin	D5	Jan. 6
Warren A. Richard	D1	Jan. 7
Bobbie H. Martin	D5	Jan. 8
Larry N. Cruth	D1	Jan.18
Noel C. Calkin	CO	Jan.20
Earl E. Hoskins, Jr.	CO	Jan.20
Thomas D. McDonald	D3	Jan.21
Paul Korenak	D9	Jan.22
Harley F. Ross	D7	Jan.28

January Retirements

Name	Location	Years of Service
Keith Pritchard	D10	31
Karen Williams	D10	32
Mary Olsen	D1	25
Mitchell Willis	D1	11
Ron Harrison	D2	30
Maurita Miller	D2	13
Jerry Steele	D2	31
Darrell Barnes	D3	27
Lee Ann Kelly	D3	18
Kevin Skinner	D3	27
Richard Uhlmeyer	D3	27
Stuart Greer	D5	35
Steven Widaman	D5	31
Johnny Holland	D6	9
Michael Pennock	D6	32
Ronald Schlett	D6	30
Larry Van De Mark	D7	26
Thomas Bitting	D8	26
Andy Core	D8	31
Anthony Farley	D8	31
Gary Mawhiney	D8	33
Dennis Underhill	D8	36
Frank Baker	D9	31
James McMillian	D9	21
Matthew Lumpkin	CO	31
Daniel Tschirgi	CO	15
Stephen Derendinger	CO	34
Carolyn Ruder	CO	13
David Dodds	CO	27
John Martin	CO	25



Central Office

A Healthier 2010

In an effort to kick off 2010 on a healthier note, 25 Central Office employees have joined the Weight Watchers at Work program. The program is coordinated through the MEE Zone and is available to all MoDOT employees. During the first six weeks of the program, the group has lost 163 pounds!

When asked why she joined Weight Watchers at Work, Sue Feltrop, executive assistant with Resource Management, said she knew it was a healthy way to lose weight.

“I don’t look at it like a diet, but a way to learn to eat healthier,” said Feltrop. “The program works perfectly since we are able to use MEE Zone hours over the lunch period and not have to leave home in the evenings. This way, I am able to spend more time with my family.”

Nancy Jordan, senior administrative technician with Employee Development, is a previous Weight Watchers



member but has found a lot of value in having co-workers participate with her.

“I have been a member of Weight Watchers for the past six months and have done really well,” said Jordan. “The big difference is I am able to go

to the meetings with co-workers, and that makes it so much more fun. Also, having your support group sit right next to you on a daily basis certainly adds to the accountability aspect of the program.”

The program is not only focused on losing weight, but also on making better decisions regarding eating habits. If you would like to join in the fun, it is not too late! Contact Ashley Halford at Ashley.Halford@modot.mo.gov to sign up.

What is ITIP?

You may have heard about a technology request going through ITIP, but do you know what’s behind the acronym?

The Information Technology Improvement Program is an ongoing program designed to maintain and improve the Information Technology MoDOT depends upon. The ITIP Committee is a standing committee that reviews and approves Information System’s spending plan.

Based on the same philosophy as MoDOT’s State Transportation Improvement Program, the committee is made up of eight people, six from Central Office and two district engineers. Members come from across the organizational chart. The committee reviews the IS spending plan at the start of the fiscal year and technology projects throughout the year that are over \$100,000 and follow their progress from beginning to completion.

Basically, ITIP helps ensure that projects and technologies are the right solution for MoDOT as an organization and that limited resources are being focused in the right places.

“We’ve never been in a position where we have all the resources we need to meet the demands coming in,” said Mike Miller, director of Information Systems. “Demand has always exceeded our resources whether it’s people, time or dollars. ITIP helps us prioritize and manage the resources to the fullest degree.”

Miller said ITIP helps direct these resources toward the hardware, software and services that will benefit MoDOT the most.

For information on ITIP visit their intranet page at www.intranet/itip.

Transportation Day



Feb. 3 was Transportation Day at the Missouri State Capitol. Displays set up in the rotunda included information about multimodal, motor carrier and safety programs.



Chekesha Nelson, intermediate multimodal operations specialist, makes sure everything is ready to answer questions from visitors and legislators.

for more info

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D1

Northwest

Twenty-Four Bridges

by M. Elaine Justus



Holly L. Murphy

Harrison County Commissioners hosted a meeting of stakeholders on Feb. 8. It gave MoDOT an opportunity to alert everyone at one time about the impact of this year's construction season.

This construction season, the Northwest District will begin implementing the second year of the statewide bridge improvement plan. The county to be impacted first and hardest is Harrison County. After totaling all the bridges in our regular STIP program and the Safe Sound programs, Harrison County will have 24 bridges re-decked or replaced in the 2010 construction season. That represents a lot of closed roads, so it was important that we alert those most impacted: schools, law enforcement, emergency providers, postal carriers, etc. Over 20 people from all over the county came on a very snowy day to hear the news. Troy Slagle, the northwest regional field engineer for the bridge improvement project, gave them an overview of the program while Community Relations (M. Elaine Justus and Holly Murphy) shared our proposed communication plan. Precise maps and mock-ups of newspaper ads, shopper inserts, public service radio announcements, Web sites and direct mail were all offered as elements of the comprehensive plan. The goal of 24 bridges in one season is daunting, but the community made it clear they appreciate our efforts to address the needs of bridges that were originally built between 1928 and 1962.

A Little Bit of History

by M. Elaine Justus

6 | A Missouri State Highway Patrolman from Kansas City recently contacted the Northwest District office in an effort to find a little information about a sign he had purchased on E-bay. The



sign is orange metal with the words "STATE PATROL" embossed at the top and "MISSOURI STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT" in smaller letters at the bottom. Our retirees helped us to identify the sign as one used in the 1920s to identify local farmers who were hired, along with their horse or mule teams, to help us maintain dirt roads. The sign would be attached to the MoDOT equipment so that folks would know they were there to "patrol the roads" for the highway department. Allegedly, the farmers were also issued badges to wear, but there do not seem

Beam Me Up

by M. Elaine Justus

Construction of the new Amelia Earhart Memorial Bridge across the Missouri River at Atchison, KS, took a giant leap forward recently, when the delivery of the concrete beams began. In late January, the first shipment, composed of six of the beams, was placed on trailers in Lincoln, Nebraska and got as far as Elwood, Kansas where the beams were met by Missouri State Highway Patrol's Troop H. After inspections were done, permits approved, and escorts were in place, they began their journey to the Missouri side of the bridge.



Holly L. Murphy

The beams, traveling in groups of six, made an imposing sight on the highways.



Holly L. Murphy

Each beam and trailer measured 200 ft. in length and weighed 210,000 lbs.

Archer Western Contractors, Ltd., of Chicago, Ill., was awarded the bi-state contract for the bridge. Completion is expected in the fall of 2011.



Jon Morrow

The beams were installed at the bridge as soon as they were delivered, even if it meant at night.

to be any examples of the badges left anywhere. The truth is that MoDOT accomplished a couple of things by doing this. Not only did we get help taking care of our vast expanse of rural roads,

but we put people to work and helped a lot of farm families survive the depression that followed the end of World War I in 1918.



Archive Photo

Local farmers and their teams of mules or horses were hired to pull our equipment in the mid-1920s to keep our dirt roads passable.

for more info

Community Relations Manager	M. Elaine Justus
Phone	816.387.2353
E-mail	margaret.justus@modot.mo.gov
3602 North Belt Highway	
St. Joseph, MO 64506-1399	

D2

North Central

Won't Stop Until We Drop!

It was awesome to see that statewide fatalities were reduced for the fourth year in a row, hitting the lowest mark since 1950.

The district also enjoyed a decrease in fatalities for 2009 with 27 total, down from 30 in 2008. "Although it's not the number we were looking for, which

Skouby said the district was off to a great start early in 2009, but then a couple of bad months brought the total back up.

With regard to safety belt usage, the breakdown came out like this:

03-Buckled	01-Motorcycle
22-Unbuckled	01-ATV Accident



Buckles the Bear and Diane Nanneman join the Moberly school kids.

is zero," said Blueprint Chair Dan Skouby, "our numbers are going down every year."

Only one time since 2004 was the total lower than 27, which was 25 in 2006. The highest total since 2004 occurred in 2005 with 46 fatalities.

Statistics showed that many accidents were one-vehicle, and the occupants ejected or partially ejected because they were not restrained by a safety belt. "It is very disheartening to think that probably at least half of these fatalities could have survived if they were only wearing their safety belt," said Skouby.

Although the truth about these fatalities is very sad, it will not discourage or hamper the conviction of the North Central Region's coalition to continue its efforts in education and training.

The coalition has completed working with the schools for the Battle of the Belts Program and will soon be presenting the winning schools their cash prizes. This year's winners were:



Buckles and his two biggest fans at the January Lifestyle Fair in Moberly.

Last year, Skouby, Co-chair Amy Crawford and Diane Nanneman attended over 90 events visiting all kinds of groups from schools to rotary clubs to talk about highway safety. They also enlisted the help of other employees in various departments as well as other members of the coalition.

Some of the most enjoyable groups are the very young kids. They love seeing Buckles the Bear and learning about the "Get Your Buckle On" dance. They are taught about the importance of wearing safety belts, bicycle safety including recognizing and obeying road signs and traffic signals, and more.

School programs are customized to be age appropriate. Older driver training courses and child passenger technician certifications are also offered.

- Statewide Winner**
- Northwestern High School - Silver Level
- Regional Winners**
- Northwestern High School - Highest Overall
 - Malta Bend High School - Most Improved

Currently the coalition is gearing up for spring, working with high schools to bring the Arrive Alive message into prom and graduation activities; and scheduling visits for the elementary and middle school groups as well.

Some of the things the group plans to focus on this summer is town and county fairs, summer school opportunities, safety towns, older driver training and child safety technician certifications.

Supporting a Cause



In January, MoDOT hosted the American Red Cross for the regional blood drive. Twenty-one attended to donate and one was even a first timer.

Because a person can donate blood every 56 days, Senior Risk Management Technician Jamie Martin has scheduled the Red Cross to visit the district four

more times this year so employees can stay on track to donate as soon as they are eligible. The blood drives are open to all MoDOT employees and other state agencies in the area.

Above, General Services Manager Joey Hinton supports the cause.

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As the Miami Bridge project continues throughout the year, you can now log on to the project Web site and follow the progress with our new Miami Bridge newsletter. Each newsletter is packed with project information and great photos to keep you updated. Login at www.modot.mo.gov/northcentral/miamibridgeproject.htm. Resident Engineer James Gillespie and Construction Project Office Assistant Suzie Mueller developed and maintain the newsletter.

D3

North east

A "1950" Safety Celebration

In 1950, Cinderella opened in theaters, silly putty was sold, the snowmobile was invented, and the automatic transmission was added to cars. Not since 1950, however, have there been fewer fatalities on Missouri roads than in 2009.

"Even though we will continue to reduce the number, it is an accomplishment when you think about how many vehicles are on our roads today compared to 60 years ago," said NE Regional Blueprint Partner and Chief of Foristell Police Department Doug Johnson.



In conjunction with Highway Safety, the regional committee held a recognition event thanking their Blueprint partners for their efforts.

"We've seen 10 fewer fatalities in our region alone," Chief Johnson said. "If we can just keep working together to implement safer engineering features on our roads, increase law enforcement and offer education to all drivers, I'm optimistic we will see the number continue to drop," he commented.

The group was entertained by a presentation comparing 1950 to more recent years, which included video clips of vehicles from another era, 1950's music, inventions, prices, Missouri laws, and lifestyles.

Tana Akright, community relations specialist and coordinator of the regional Battle of the Belt program, received a Noteworthy Award for her efforts to obtain participation from more than double the number of schools over the previous year.



8 These chiefs of police used snowmobiles for their own winter Olympic competition at the regional Blueprint meeting. The snowmobile was invented in 1950 and these were given to the Blueprint members as a "thank you" for their efforts and as a reminder that not since 1950 have fatalities been as low as in 2009. Left to right: Eddie Bogue, Palmyra; Rich McDermott, New Florence; Doug Johnson, Foristell; Greg Houdyshell, Warrenton.

Tana Akright, intermediate community relations specialist, was recognized at the Northeast Regional Blueprint meeting with a Noteworthy Award for her efforts to coordinate and lead the Battle of the Belt program for the Northeast Region.



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Around the District



Mike Haggerty, J.R. Epperson, and Larry Cornelius have begun installing 800 to 1000 new chevrons this year. More than 10,000 chevrons will be installed and/or replaced in the NE District over the next 10 years, and the sign crews have already started. "This is a safety initiative to help motorists better identify curves that have a speed reduction of 15 mph or less on the route speed limit," explained Brian Untiedt, traffic engineer.



GREEN TEAM

To continue MoDOT's efforts to be environmentally responsible, The Green Team for the NE District is helping identify the many opportunities for recycling in northeast Missouri. This is a new D-Tracker measure for the district (<http://wwwi/intranet/d3/TrackerTop10.htm>), and the "Team" is excited about the opportunities. Brandi Baldwin, intermediate construction inspector, believes everyone should make an effort to recycle, even if it's a little inconvenient at times. The team is already bringing awareness about the various items that can be recycled.

Pre-Trip Inspections Important

Statewide, dump truck training was being revised to include a pre-trip inspection. Even before that knowledge, Senior Equipment Technician Chris Troesser had made a similar suggestion

to the district engineer. "I thought we had room for improvement in the area of pre-trip inspections, so I made a suggestion to offer training to the maintenance crews," Troesser said. A few weeks later,

Troesser, who is also a dump truck trainer, learned of the new module that included pre-trip inspections.

"Before they even get into the truck, they have to walk around it using a check list to make sure the truck is safe to operate," Troesser explained. He said they look for things like fluid levels, oil leaks, loose parts, and low tires. "It shouldn't take but about 10 minutes for a good pre-trip inspection," he added.

Right now it's on commercial vehicles, but Troesser would like to see the pre-trip inspection done on all MoDOT vehicles each time before they are used.



Chris Troesser, senior equipment technician, demonstrates the proper lubrication technique for a u-joint to Mexico Maintenance Crew Leader Jason Walton.

D4

Kansas City Area

Bob says “Don’t Barrel Through the Work Zone!”

by Jennifer Benefield



Barrel Bob, a 10-foot tall, orange barrel man, is pointing the way to safe travels through the kcICON corridor. Bob first greeted motorists at I-29/35 and Northeast Parvin Road starting on Jan. 25 and will remain a fixture on the kcICON Project, using a message board to remind motorists to slow down.

As winter weather continues, travelers should drive safely in the construction zone. “Our crews are not as active during the winter months, and motorists sometimes need to be reminded that they are still traveling through a construction site,” said kcICON Project Director Brian Kidwell. “We



Bob stands tall on the south end of the kcICON project reminding drivers to slow down and stay alert.

care about the public’s safety, as well as the safety of our crews, and encourage motorists to abide by the posted speed limits.”

MoDOT is releasing a Public Service Announcement video entitled Driving Safely Through the kcICON Corridor. This video is now available for any news outlet to pick up by visiting the MoDOT FTP site at: ftp://ftp.modot.org/CRmedia/kcicon/kcICON_PSA/.

Barrel Bob is a creation of Robert Ohl, a Clarkson Construction employee. Barrel Bob took about ten hours to build, and comes in standard safety

gear, including a reflective body, hard hat, and safety glasses.

The \$245 million kcICON project will reconstruct/rehabilitate 4.7 miles of I-29/35 from just north of Route 210/Armour Road in North Kansas City into the northeast corner of the downtown Kansas City, Mo. freeway loop. The project includes improving outdated interchanges and the construction of the Christopher S. Bond Bridge – a new landmark, cable-stay Missouri River Bridge. Additional information is available on the project’s Web site: www.kcicon.com or on facebook “kcICON Project.”

Route 71 One Step Closer to Completion

by Steve Porter



Work on Route 71 progresses as the interchange at 163rd Street and Route 71 opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony marking completion of the final two ramps. More than 40 attendees joined District Engineer Beth Wright, State Sen. David Pearce, State Rep. Chris Molendorp, Cass

County North Commissioner Brian Baker, Belton Mayor Jimmy Odom and MHTC Commissioner Stephen Miller to cut the blue ribbon showing progress along the busy corridor.

While construction continues on the project as weather allows, the opening recognizes meeting the goal of getting

the interchange open with all ramps functioning before the end of 2009. The reconstructed interchange now becomes an attractive alternative for northern Cass County motorists to access Route 71. It is expected to draw traffic away from the Route 58 interchange, particularly important during peak periods, when backups clog the ramps and intersections.

Work began on the \$13.5 million interchange project in Sept. 2008. Ideker Construction Co. is the general contractor for the project. The project is substantially funded by Belton through a cost-share partnership with MoDOT.

Completion of the interchange sets the stage for further transportation improvements in the area such as Markey Road, a municipal project, and completion of the new North Cass Parkway interchange two miles south on Route 71 and a reconfigured Route 150 to the north.

The new 163rd Street interchange replaces the two Route 71 bridges

with longer and wider bridges, widens and lengthens ramps at 163rd Street, adds signals and sidewalks to ensure pedestrian connectivity east and west of Route 71. Pavement at 163rd Street (Route Y) is now widened to provide four through-lanes plus turn lanes. The new interchange is designed to accommodate a third lane in each direction, once funding and regional priority is approved.



MHTC Commissioner Stephen Miller shares the importance that this interchange will bring to motorists in the area.

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D5

Central

High-Tech Signals Mean Smoother Travel on Route AC in Columbia

by Holly Dentner

Most of us have found ourselves sitting at a red light, wondering how long we'll have to wait before it changes to green. If you've spent any time with employees of MoDOT's traffic division, you know that the system behind those lights can be highly complex, depending on how many vehicles use the intersection.

Many of our state routes run through busy, populated areas where signalized intersections are necessary to safely move traffic through the area. Our traffic studies specialists analyze traffic movements and volumes in these locations to make sure the signals function in the most efficient and safe way. They recently started testing a new tool that may make that job a little easier.

The new system is called InSync, and it can be attached to existing traffic management software. It is used along a corridor with a number of signalized intersections and can calculate the need for signal changes in real time.

"When we re-time a signal, we figure our initial timings based on one traffic count, which is just a snapshot of one day of traffic," said Jason Sommerer, senior traffic studies specialist. "InSync uses cameras to constantly count traffic and adjust the timing as needed."

Like other traffic signal cameras, the

InSync cameras do not record any information. They capture the number of vehicles on the roadway so the system can calculate when the signal needs to change.

MoDOT is testing the system on Route AC Grindstone Parkway in Columbia, from U.S. Route 63 to Route 163 (Providence Road). The 2.5 mile stretch of highway includes nine signalized intersections.

"InSync has the flexibility to allow the signals to 'talk' to each other and adjust the timing as traffic moves along Grindstone," said Jason. "The new system should make it possible for most vehicles to make it through all the signals without hitting a red light."

The system was installed on Feb. 2, and Jason says the district has been working



A screen shot from the InSync camera captures vehicles moving through the intersection of Routes AC and 163. The purple and yellow lane shading is part of its sensor system.



Route AC at Bluff Creek Drive, facing east.

with the company to make minor adjustments, particularly during the peak travel times.

District 4 implemented the first InSync system in the state on Route 291 in the Kansas City area, which has been functioning for over a year. Organizational Results is conducting an in-depth analysis of the Route 291 system to verify its value to the department.

Around the District



A tow plow makes quick work of clearing Business Route 50 (Missouri Blvd.) in Jefferson City. The plow was out during a Feb. 5 snowfall.



Pettis County residents examine displays during a community briefing on Feb. 10. MoDOT held the briefing to discuss ten bridge replacements scheduled for 2010 as part of the Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program.

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Flashing Yellow Arrows in Tipton

Motorists traveling on U.S. Route 50 will see something new as they pass through the intersection of Routes 50, 5 and B in Tipton. MoDOT recently installed new traffic signals that include a flashing yellow arrow indication for left turns.

The purpose of the flashing yellow signal is to reduce confusion experienced when the left-turn lane display appears the same as the green ball indication for the adjacent through lanes.

"The flashing yellow arrow means that you can make a left turn, but you have to yield to oncoming traffic and then proceed with caution," said Brandon Campbell, senior traffic studies specialist. "It replaces the traditional left turn on green ball used in dedicated left turn lanes."

A solid yellow arrow indication warns drivers that the left turn signal is about to go red and they should prepare to stop or complete their turn if they are in the intersection. A solid green arrow means that it is safe to turn left because oncoming traffic must stop.

The signal upgrade also included some much-needed work like the replacement of the existing wooden

poles and span wires with steel poles and mast arms to hold the signal heads.

"This is the first flashing yellow arrow indication in the Central District, but we plan to incorporate them into upcoming signal upgrades," said Brandon. "There are sixteen more upgrades planned through next June, beginning with intersections in Columbia and Jefferson City. All will include the flashing yellow arrow."

Brandon says that the signal transition has been smooth in Tipton. The entire traffic signal upgrade there cost approximately \$92,000 and is expected to reduce future maintenance costs at the intersection. James H. Drew Corporation of Indianapolis, Ind., was contracted to do the work.



Crews finished work on the Tipton intersection in late January.

D6

St. Louis Area

Congratulations to the DBE Graduates

by *Falon McCain*

MoDOT's Supportive Services department recently celebrated its second Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) graduation. Eleven local DBE firms were awarded certificates for completing the Entrepreneurship Training Program.

The DBEs worked diligently for 12 weeks to complete the program. They met on Saturday mornings, twice a month, to develop business plans, and participate in classes designed to help the owners increase their business capital value and improve corporate/business portfolios in specific and measurable areas.

was a great help with putting a business plan together. It helps you understand numbers in a way you never have before. You've got new and not so new companies coming together to share their experiences, and you end up with a great exchange of good ideas."

Tom Blair, MoDOT's District 6 Assistant District Engineer, said the highlight of the evening was "visiting with all the individual graduates."

Blair said, "I really enjoyed getting to hear the graduates' stories of what they learned and how they are already applying that to make their companies better. I hope they walk away with an



Congratulations to the graduates of the DBE Supportive Services Entrepreneurship Program

"The classes helped me open my eyes in so many ways," said Carmen Blumer, President of Bemark Corporation. "I realized I was weak in some areas and strong in others. This program needs to continue because the system is unfair, but with these classes, we are able to go to a higher level. We (DBEs) need to show the community, the country, we can do it."

Blumer was the first of the graduates to complete and submit a business plan. George Phillips, President of Philips & Associates, Inc., described the Kauffman Foundation's Fast Trac business development model and explained its importance. Phillips & Associates implemented the Kauffman model into the Supportive Services training program. Phillips and Patricia Weekley, MoDOT Senior Civil Rights Specialist and program facilitator, presented the DBEs with their certificates.

"It was nice to get together (with everyone) and catch up; talk about what's going on with our companies," said Cathy Allen, Principal of A.U. Innovative Land Management. "This program

improved network of small businesses, improved business management and leadership skills, and the confidence and knowledge to successfully bid on an improved multitude of projects.

DBE Graduates

MaryAnn Taylor-Crate

Added Dimension, LLC.

Lianne Reizer

All America Transportation, Inc.

Rene Upshaw & Kathey Allen

A.U. Innovative Land Mgmt, LLC.

Carmen M. Blumer

Bemark Corporation

Bernard & Eliza Simington

City Design Group, Inc.

Kimberly Maclean

Druids Woodworking

Celia L. Robinson-Daniel

H.L.S., Inc.

Jimmie L. Brown

J.L. Brown Contracting Service

Joyce E. Pazdera

KA Pazdera Hauling & Excav, LLC.

Kendall & Marteana Davidson

Kendall's Hauling, LLC.

Roger Ordonez

UP & Going, LLC.

"Shirley Norris Day" in St. Louis for her 80th Birthday

by *Linda Wilson*

Missouri Department of Transportation Project Manager Shirley Norris celebrated her 80th birthday February 4. Her family and co-workers at MoDOT managed to surprise her with a birthday party. They also fulfilled one of her longtime wishes. She got to ride a Zamboni.

Shirley says she wanted to ride or drive one ever since she attended her first hockey game as a child with her father.

her to study. She was one of only three women in the engineering school at the time.

Shirley graduated in 1951 with a degree in civil engineering and worked for a year before moving to Colorado with her husband. Shirley was just 34 years old when her husband died, leaving her widowed and caring for her three children. Once her children were grown, Shirley returned to work. In 1977 at



Shirley Norris driving the Zamboni at Queeny Park on her February birthday.

"I always wanted to drive one," she said. "My kids have always known it."

With the help of St. Louis County Executive Charlie Dooley, Shirley got on the Zamboni at the county's Queeny Park. Dooley also proclaimed February 4, 2010, "Shirley Norris Day in St Louis County." The Missouri House and Senate also sent her official resolutions on her birthday. MoDOT director Pete Rahn also called personally to wish Shirley a happy birthday.

"It was awesome, I can't believe people went to such an extent to satisfy an old woman," joked Shirley. "People are very kind to the elderly at MoDOT."



Shirley Norris celebrates her 80th birthday with colleagues at the District 6 Office.

At MoDOT, Shirley is considered a pioneer. She enjoyed math and science, but was told that women didn't go into engineering. She set out to prove skeptics wrong. In 1947, she applied to Vanderbilt University, which was the school she really had her heart set on attending. Vanderbilt initially declined her admission. They did not want to accept female students in the engineering department, but Shirley pushed. The school later conceded and allowed

the age of 47, she joined MoDOT, then known as the Missouri State Highway Department.

Today, Shirley remains busy working as the project manager on numerous road projects for South St. Louis County and Jefferson Counties in Missouri. As a project manager since 1997, she has consistently carried the heaviest workload of projects in District 6 and is the only project manager that covers two area teams. At her peak, she was managing 45 to 50 projects in the design phase. In 2009, she had 19 projects worth more than \$50 million awarded to contracts. With the downturn in overall work, she currently manages approximately 20 projects in design and 20 in construction.

Shirley has three grown children and six grandchildren. She volunteers her time to causes such as the Special Olympics and the St. Louis Wheelchair Athletic Association. Both groups support and promote athletic competition for the disabled. She works to help raise money for both organizations to ensure that these programs continue. She has also volunteered as a Girl Scout leader, and as a swim instructor.

While other long time employees typically retire at an earlier age, Shirley continues working and remains busy. She has no plans on retiring anytime soon.

"As long as I am blessed with health, I will keep working," said Shirley. "I'm still having fun, I really like the job, and I really like the people."

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D7

Southwest

District Tool & Equipment Winners Announced

Winners Advance to Statewide Tool Expo This Spring

by Wendy Brunner-Lewis

The 2009-2010 Tool & Equipment winners for District 7 were announced in January. The winners will go to the statewide Tool & Equipment Expo in the spring.

The categories this year are Snow and Ice Response, Preventive Pavement Maintenance, and Drainage. The innovations are to allow employees to complete tasks faster, better and cheaper.

The winners in the “Tool” part of the competition are:

Drainage
Glen Kester and Jeff Divine of Golden City came up with a chain and two



pins to maneuver tapered and flared concrete end sections into place (photo bottom left).

Preventive Pavement Maintenance
Neosho Maintenance’s dipper box mounts to the pull paver. Shovels, rakes and other tools can be dipped in the box, coated with anti-seize agent and then pulled out of the dipper box ready to use (photo below).



The “Equipment” winners are:
Preventive Pavement Maintenance
Neosho Maintenance’s hitches attach and detach using pockets on the back of a truck. The hitches work with an edge-rut box and a chip spreader (no photo available).

Snow and Ice Response
Seneca Maintenance’s plow blade holder allows one person to safely remove and install snow plow blades and the back-up blade at the same time (photo bottom right).

Neosho Maintenance replaced the small chain that attaches the snow plow pins to the bumper of a truck with plastic-coated steel cable. The chain tended to twist when the plow was on, tightening so much that it was difficult to pull the pins out to take the plow off (right).

Congratulations to the winners! We have some talented and creative employees in our district!



Tow Plow at Work



Tim Rice

A new snow plow is on the road in District 7 this winter: the tow plow. This plow is pulled behind a tandem-axle truck and is able to swing out to one side, which doubles the plow width of a standard snowplow.

District 7 has four tow plows in its fleet this winter. Tow plows can plow a length of up to 26 feet and are able to clear two lanes of traffic simultaneously.

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Over the Limit, Under Arrest



Lori Marble

Police Chief Greg Dagnan announces the winning design for the new impaired enforcement patrol car.

Carthage Police Chief Greg Dagnan recently showed off the winning graphic design of high school sophomore Jesse McConnell, which now emboldens the department’s new patrol car for impaired driving enforcement.

As an incentive to participate in all DWI enforcement mobilizations, the Division of Highway Safety provides grant money for a DWI enforcement vehicle and other equipment to randomly selected participating agencies. From those agencies, a drawing was held for the new squad car, a 2010 Ford Crown Victoria.

McConnell, an advanced art student at Carthage High School, told the Carthage Press late last year, in reference to his design, “I’ve got to stay out of trouble now – because my name’s on the car.”

In 2009, Carthage Police Department arrested 175 drunk drivers and made an additional 170 arrests for possession of intoxicants by a minor. While DWI enforcement is a part of Carthage Police Department’s daily patrol, 143 overtime hours were dedicated to DWI enforcement in 2009.

D8

Springfield Area

Two Honored For Helping Co-Worker Injured on Job

by Angela Eden and Bob Edwards

Members of the District 8 Bridge Crew had repaired a bridge over the Osage Fork River east of Lebanon and were tearing down the work zone when crew leader Travis Tucker suffered a neck and head injury and tumbled into a roadside ditch.

Co-workers Paul Hyde and Kevin Keller responded quickly. Hyde knelt and kept Tucker immobilized. Keller drove to higher ground to get a cell

phone signal, called for help and returned to direct Route 32 traffic around the scene.

Hyde and Keller have been honored for

their “extraordinary actions” on behalf of Tucker’s safety in the October 2008 incident. MoDOT Director Pete Rahn, in January in Springfield, shook their hands and presented them with framed certificates of appreciation.

Tucker, recovering at home with his family after a lengthy hospital stay, is an intermediate maintenance worker on the Bridge Crew. Hyde is now a maintenance worker at the Republic shop. Maintenance worker Keller remains on the Bridge Crew.

Keller and Hyde said they don’t feel like they did anything special in assisting Tucker.

Anybody else would have reacted the same way, Keller said. “I don’t need any special recognition.”



Bridge Crew Maintenance Worker Kevin Keller, left, and Republic Maintenance Worker Paul Hyde, right, visit with MoDOT Director Pete Rahn after Rahn presented them certificates for coming to the aid of injured co-worker Travis Tucker.

Bob Edwards

Hyde said, “I don’t need accolades. I just want him to get better.”

Since the incident, Hyde and Tucker have developed a close friendship. “Kind of like brothers” was the way Tucker put it.

Throughout Tucker’s hospitalization and ongoing physical therapy, Hyde became a frequent visitor. He said he had learned a lot from Tucker about working hard as part of a crew and the

proper way to treat people. “He’s quite the example,” Hyde said.

Tucker said he deeply appreciates Keller and Hyde for how they responded to his injury.

“I’m so grateful MoDOT did something for these men who went above and beyond,” Tucker said. “They are very deserving.”

Safe & Sound Rehabs Begin

Work begins this month on two District 8 Safe & Sound bridges:

- Laclede County Route A/C bridge over I-44 at Phillipsburg. Rehabilitation. Prime contractor: APAC-Missouri, Columbia. Cost: \$354,000.
- Greene County Route UU bridge over Clear Creek north of Bois D’Arc. Rehabilitation. Prime contractor: Hartman Construction, Springfield. Cost: \$191,000.

Each bridge is scheduled to be closed March 15. The Route A/C bridge will be closed for up to 70 calendar days. The Route UU bridge will be closed for up to 60 calendar days.

The district’s first two Safe & Sound bridge projects were completed in 2009.

**“Talkin’ Transportation”
Call-In Radio Show**

KWTO 560 AM, Springfield
10-10:50 a.m. Wednesdays
radiospringfield.com

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Bob Edwards

D8 at Work

1. Mixing quick-setting concrete for a new sign post at Route 60 and Route 125 in Rogersville is Seymour Senior Maintenance Worker Ken Evans.
2. Plowing snow on Route 65 north of Fair Grove is Buffalo Senior Maintenance Worker Sim Smitherman after he fills (inset) the rig’s calcium chloride tank.
3. Transportation Project Designer Larry Colson, left, shows a customer the drawings for a project to expand the interchange at Route 160/13 (Campbell Avenue) and Route 60 (James River Freeway) in Springfield and to six-lane a 1.4-mile long section of Route 160/13 south of the freeway. This took place in a public meeting at the Springfield-Greene County Library Center.

13

Signing Veteran Retires

by Angela Eden

Sign Crew Maintenance Supervisor Mark Knight

Service: 25 years (Hired Nov. 1, 1984)

Career: Maintenance worker to assistance maintenance supervisor, Striping/Sign Crew, 1984-1996; assistant maintenance supervisor, Springfield Maintenance, 1996-2009; maintenance supervisor, Sign Crew, 2009-2010

Memorable Accomplishments: Striping the pavement before opening sections of the James River Freeway (Route 60 in Springfield in 1980s and working on the Concrete Crew during a 2005 push

to make significant repairs to pavement throughout the district during the Smooth Roads Initiative

Favorite project: Traveling around the district with the Striping/Signing crews, working with and meeting different people

Quote: “The guys I worked with made it enjoyable.”

Post-MoDOT plans: Operating his lawn-mowing business; spending more time with family, including wife, Vicki



Knight

D9

South Central

D9 Coalition Promotes Safety at MSU Game

Fans attending the recent basketball game between Missouri State University and Mineral Area College not only had fun at the event, but went home with a greater appreciation of road safety.

The South Central Regional Coalition for Roadway Safety sponsored the game, held at the West Plains Civic Center on Jan. 16. The evening began with Certified Appraiser Lisa Durnell leading a group of coalition members in a touching rendition of the National Anthem.

Coalition members were out in force, giving demonstrations, handing out T-shirts and providing fans with information on roadway safety. According to Regional Coordinator Kelly Martin, the demonstrators made an impact. “We used our Rollover Demonstrator and Safety Belt Convincer, both of which promote seatbelt safety,” Martin said.

“Few people are able to walk away from those demonstrators without a greater appreciation for importance of seatbelt use,” said Martin. “Fans could



Coalition members Jennifer Atkinson, Troy Gilley and Kevin Clark shoot Arrive Alive shirts into the crowd.

also drive the SAFE-T Drunk Driving Course, designed to allow simulation of both walking and driving while intoxicated.”

During halftime, fans laughed as MSU players struggled to make free throw shots while wearing fatal vision goggles and competing against a “sober” audience member.

Throughout the evening, fans heard statistics and facts about driving safely. Incentive items were also given out to help keep safety messages in the fans’ minds long after the buzzer sounded.

According to Martin, the event was a success. “We appreciated the opportunity to share our message of road safety, and this was a fun way to get our message across,” said Martin.

District 6 Crew Comes South for Winter Weather



Crews from District 6 plow Route 60.

Forecasts in the South Central District for the last week of January predicted heavy snowfall accumulating on Route 60 throughout the weekend. While D9 crews were coordinated and prepared for the predicted event, a towplow and crew from District 6 were sent to aid as needed.

The D6 crew worked out of the Willow Springs Maintenance Building and focused on Routes 60 and 63. While the snow levels were lower than expected, the additional towplow was used to clear Route 60 more quickly for area motorists.

District Engineer Tom Stehn said the dedication of the crew was appreciated. “The willingness of these individuals to

give up time with their families to help our team really demonstrates the teamwork we have here at MoDOT and their efforts are appreciated,” said Stehn.

District 9 Shows Appreciation to Employees

In recognition of the dedication and hard work of the eighteen employees who sacrificed time with friends and family to help the MoDOT team in District 1, D9 held an Appreciation Luncheon.

Although the event was delayed once due to weather, the potluck meal was provided by members of the management team on Jan. 21.

Internet Page Gets A Fresh Look

Visitors to the South Central District webpage will now find a fresher, cleaner format.

The updated Web site launched on Feb. 5 with quick links, a “features” section and additional project information.

“We hope the public appreciates the improvements and finds this website easier to navigate,” said South Central Community Relations Manager Christi Turkleson. The site also features the districts first “virtual meeting” on potential improvements to Route 19 in Crawford County.



The proposed project offers multiple options for public review, and the virtual meeting format has already succeeded in generating several responses.

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South Central Employees who worked over the Christmas holiday attended an Appreciation Luncheon on Jan. 21.

D10

Southeast

And the Winner is...

District 10 Announces BOTB Winners

With 32 Southeast District schools participating in the 2009 Battle of the Belt Challenge, 27 successfully completed the statewide competition.

“We were thrilled to have such as overwhelming response from our Southeast District schools,” said Southeast District Youth Coordinator Belinda McMurry. “This year, we had more schools complete the competition than ever before.”

With 99 percent of students buckling up, Saxony Lutheran High School was District 10’s winner for the highest overall percentage of seatbelt usage. Additionally, Saxony Lutheran High School tied for the highest usage in the entire state.

Hayti High School, winner for the most improved seatbelt usage, began the Battle of the Belt Challenge with only 21.6 percent of students wearing their seatbelts. But by the end of the challenge, the school’s usage rate had increased by 66.34 percent, making Hayti High School the most improved in the district and statewide.

Six D10 schools also won statewide recognition awards for completing the challenge with seatbelt usage rates of 91 percent or higher. These schools include: Saxony Lutheran, Oran, Malden, Notre Dame, Scott City, and Bell City High Schools.

“The goal of BOTB is to help schools increase seatbelt usage among their students and to hopefully maintain these improved rates -- ultimately reducing fatalities and saving lives,” said McMurry.

In addition to the statewide awards, the Southeast District also presented schools with local awards for the best educational campaigns, “setting and meeting their own goal,” and producing a safety video/PSA.

Winners of the best educational campaign include: Oran High School, East Prairie High School, Advance High School and South Pemiscot High School.

Twin Rivers High School and Oran High School were recognized for “setting and meeting their goal.”

Four schools won awards for producing BOTB PSAs including: Scott City High School, South Pemiscot High School, Oran High School and Twin Rivers High School.

“Battle of the Belt is really a win-win situation for all of our participating schools,” said McMurry. “The efforts of these schools can make a difference in the lives of Missouri’s youth -- possibly even saving lives.”

For more information, contact McMurry at Belinda.Mcmurphy@modot.mo.gov or 573-472-5882.



Students at Woodland High School conduct seatbelt checks as their peers arrive for school. To successfully complete the BOTB challenge, schools conduct seatbelt checks at the beginning of the challenge, and then implement a four-week, educational campaign to improve usage rates. Finally, schools conduct a second check at the end of the campaign to gauge their progress in spreading the “buckle up” message.

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Preparation Begins for Statewide Tool and Equipment Challenge

This year’s District 10 Tool and Equipment Challenge proved that necessity truly is the mother of invention. During the challenge, maintenance employees submitted and shared their ideas for innovations to help MoDOT perform jobs better, faster, cheaper and more safely.

“Our maintenance forces work on the front lines,” said Assistant to the District Engineer Cheryl Ball. “They see and use the equipment and tools daily, making maintenance the right group to find ways to improve our roadwork processes.”

This year, maintenance forces were tasked with sharing their innovations for tools and equipment to help improve snow/ice removal, drainage work and pavement repair.

“I was impressed by the creativity and ingenuity of the tools and equipment entered into this year’s challenge,” said Ball. “The challenge was very successful.”

Ball added that the competition furthers MoDOT’s values of being one team and seeking out and welcoming any idea that increases our options.

“The ultimate goal is for employees to share their ideas so that they can be implemented throughout the district or

even statewide,” she said. “By sharing our best practices, we can make the best use of the taxpayers’ dollars.”

She said while innovative ideas have always been welcomed, finding ways to perform jobs more efficiently is becoming even more crucial.

“With the current decrease in funding, finding ways to utilize our limited resources is a necessity,” said Ball. “Luckily, the District 10 team is willing to help develop new, innovative solutions.”



The hydraulic gate for the tailgate spreader allows the driver to control the amount of materials released onto the roadway, saving both time and money.

Winners of the District 10 Tool and Equipment Challenge include:

- Belly Plow Jacks
- Hydraulic Gate for the Tailgate Spreader
- Warning Cones for Overhead Lines
- CMP Band Clamp
- Culvert Flusher

Winners of the district challenge are currently preparing for the statewide Tool and Equipment Challenge.

New Technology Comes to the Southeast District

This winter, motorists traveling over the Diversion Channel bridge on northbound Interstate 55 in Cape Girardeau County began seeing new reflectors and signs. The Southeast District was the first in the state to have the Bluestar Roadway System™ installed.

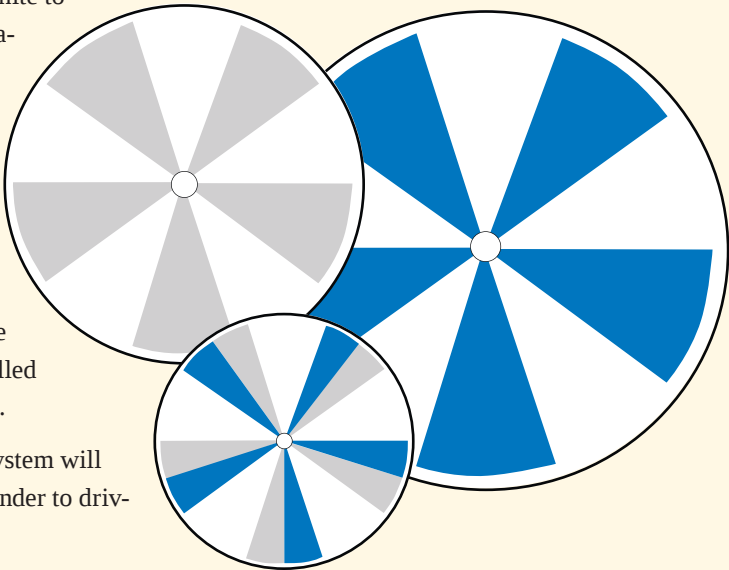
With the Bluestar Roadway System™, temperature-sensitive reflectors are mounted on guideposts and placed in front of the bridge. The reflectors change from white to blue as temperatures approach freezing. Signs which read “blue reflectors indicate freezing temperatures” have also been installed near the bridge.

“We hope the system will serve as a reminder to driv-

ers that icy conditions may be present,” said District Traffic Engineer Craig Compas. “But there is no substitute for safe driving.”

Visit www.modot.org/southeast/BluestarRoadwaySystem.htm for more information.

(below) As temperatures approach freezing, the reflectors change from white to blue, telling drivers that conditions which could result in ice are present.



Connections

The mission of *Connections* is to be a monthly source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide. It is distributed to MoDOT employees and retirees.

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Additional copies are available upon request. Suggestions, questions and comments are always welcome.



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2009 Winners of Battle of the Belt Challenge

Safety Belt Campaign Aims to Save Lives

by Kara Price

“Everyone’s a winner when you buckle up.” That was the message of the winning video for the 2009 Battle of the Belt challenge.

For the fourth year, Missouri high schools competed against each other to increase safety belt use and save lives. More than 145 Missouri high schools participated in the 2009 Battle of the Belt Challenge. Participating high schools launched two surprise seat belt checks at each school to measure student seat belt use before and after an educational campaign. In addition, schools had the opportunity to submit a 30-second video spot aimed at encouraging their peers to buckle up.

The top video entry features two students racing to their car to put their safety belt on and trying to see who is faster at buckling up. The video reinforces the message that “everyone’s a winner when you buckle up,” to teens. It can be viewed at www.saveMOyouth.com. The winning school will receive a

cash prize and the video will air statewide this year.

Thirty high schools in Missouri are statewide winners for safety belt use rates that reached the following levels during the second safety belt survey:

- Gold level: high schools with 99 percent of students wearing safety belts
- Silver level: high schools with 95 percent of students wearing safety belts
- Bronze level: high schools with 91 percent of students wearing safety belts

Each statewide winner will receive recognition from the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety at a local awards ceremony and will receive a large banner to display their accomplishment at school.

Two schools in each of the 10 regions throughout the state won awards for the Highest Overall Safety Belt Usage and Most Improved Safety Belt Usage. Each regional winner will receive \$250.

“In 2008, seven out of 10 young people killed in Missouri vehicle crashes were not buckled up,” said Leanna Depue, chair of the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety’s executive committee. “Through education, competition and fun, the Battle of the Belt Challenge can make a difference with Missouri teens and save lives.”

“These schools know the importance of buckling up,” added Depue. “Congratulations to these schools. Their renewed commitments to buckling up will result in lives saved and injuries reduced in this age group.”

Sponsored by the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety, the statewide competition ran from Oct. 5 to Nov. 20 to educate young drivers about safety belt use, reduce traffic crash injuries and save lives.

Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for young people. Results of a 2008 survey among Missouri teens

indicate four out of 10 teens are not wearing safety belts.

The Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety, in conjunction with American Family Insurance sponsored this year’s program.

For more information on the Battle of the Belt Challenge, visit www.save-MOyouth.com.



A senior at St. Joseph’s Academy marks on her clipboard at a safety belt checkpoint that another student is buckled up as she arrives to school!

2009 Winners of the Battle of the Belt Challenge			
District 1 Statewide Winner -St. Joseph Christian School - Silver Level	-Park Hill South High School - Bronze Level -Belton High School - Bronze Level	District 6 Statewide Winners -St. Joseph’s Academy - Gold Level -Christian Brothers College High School - Silver Level -Clayton High School - Silver Level -St. Francis Borgia Regional High School - Bronze Level -Lindbergh Senior High School - Bronze Level -Washington High School - Bronze Level	District 8 Statewide Winner -Ava High School - Bronze Level
District 2 Statewide Winner -Northwestern High School - Silver Level	District 5 Statewide Winners -New Bloomfield High School - Silver Level -St. Elizabeth High School - Silver Level -North Callaway High School - Bronze Level -Cole R-V (Eugene) High School - Bronze Level -Harrisburg High School - Bronze Level	Statewide Winner for Video Public Service Announcement - First Place -Washington High School - “Everyone’s a Winner When You Buckle Up”	District 9 Statewide Winner -Newburg High School - Silver Level
District 3 Statewide Winners -Knox County High School - Silver Level -Mark Twain Senior High School - Bronze Level -Highland Junior, Senior, High School - Bronze Level	Statewide Winner for Video Public Service Announcement - Second Place -Columbia Area Career Center - “Big Hands/No Excuse”	District 7 Statewide Winners -Pierce City High School - Silver Level -Lamar High School - Silver Level	District 10 Statewide Winners -Saxony Lutheran High School - Gold Level -Oran High School - Bronze Level -Malden High School - Bronze Level -Notre Dame Regional High School - Bronze Level -Scott City High School - Bronze Level -Bell City High School - Bronze Level